

## ***Human Services Advisory Committee***

### **Meeting Minutes**

Renton City Hall  
Council Conference Room, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
October 20, 2015 3:00 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Shannon Matson, Chair, called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

**ATTENDANCE:** Shannon Matson, Ryan McIrvin, Brook Dodd, Henry Malphus, Chad Buechler. **Excused:** Amy Koehl, Linda Smith. **Absent:** Leslie Anderson. **Staff:** Karen Bergsvik, Katie McClincy, Jennifer Jorgenson. **Guest:** Evelyn Boykan, Human Services Manager for Tukwila.

#### **1. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Ryan moved to approve the September Minutes as presented. Chad seconded the motion; three ayes, two abstentions; motion carried.

#### **2. SOUTH KING COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY OVERVIEW**

Ms. Boykan gave a brief recap on the studies done by the Brookings Institute. The following excerpt from *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America*, May 20, 2013, explains their philosophy on the topic: "The changing map of American poverty matters because place matters... Place intersects with core policy issues central to the long-term health and stability of metropolitan areas and to the economic success of individuals and families..." The Institute is working in conjunction with the University of Washington on translating the socio-economic data they have been collecting. So far, data shows a 25% increase in the rate, or poverty trend in this area.

The data also indicates major cities' housing stock in the Pacific Northwest is no longer considered affordable for middle to low income populations. Trends are showing these people are fleeing to the South King County cities where the public perceives housing to be less expensive.

According to Brookings, there are three drivers of economic security – Meeting basic needs; education; and, having a vibrant local economy. Economic security is tantamount to attaining stability, eliminating barriers for the underprivileged, and therefore reducing homelessness. More information on suburban poverty can be found online at [Brookings.edu](http://Brookings.edu).

Ms. Boykan shared the concept that reducing poverty needs to be looked at in a broader sense. Employers can reduce some of the hiring barriers by incorporating job training and apprenticeship programs in their hiring strategies. Government and human service entities could expand to include providing grants to school individuals for work force training. Schools could broaden their efforts to include family members in some of their programs. Social organizations (Kiwanis, Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, Soroptimists) could partner together to brainstorm programs or combine forces to benefit or mentor the underprivileged. Economic development drives jobs and eliminating barriers stimulates social recovery. There's more that can be done on a regional basis to benefit everyone; it's a matter of putting the right forums together for expanded brainstorming, along with the authority to commence meaningful, lasting changes for better outcomes.

**3. REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORTS**

Karen is involved with efforts to increase capacity regionally. There are currently four sub-committees that have been meeting individually. One goal is to jointly come up with a demonstration project and establishing a timing criteria for its implementation and duration.

Another sub-committee is looking at the current grant application/funding process. They are currently reviewing the application questions.

A third sub-committee is looking at social justice inequalities.

Chad suggested a social justice and equity tool kit should be developed and used as one guideline.

A parallel process could be developed for use during the off-year.

Another suggestion was to look at changes and tools system-wide with human services committees and getting more people involved.

The fourth sub-committee is going over the application review process. Bellevue is taking the lead on this one.

**4. ADVISORY COMMITTEE VACANCIES AND MARKETING**

There are three open positions on the Committee, and possibly a fourth one will open in the very near future. It is time to start thinking about officer elections for next year. It is customary for the Vice-Chair to take over the Chair position in the new year. Karen explained one of our Committee members is running for an elected office. If he is successful, he will have to relinquish his position on the Human Services Advisory Committee. That would leave both the Chair and Vice-Chair positions open. Karen asked members to reach out to people they know that would be an appropriate fit for this Committee and to encourage them to attend a meeting to learn more about what the mission is. At the same time, members need to seek candidates who would expand the Committee's diversity and knowledge base.

Karen asked if anyone at the table would like to volunteer to hold the position of either Chair or Vice-Chair for 2016. There were no volunteers, but Brook said at this time she would consider being on the Board, but she's already pretty busy with schooling and family matters.

**5. HUMAN SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN**

Karen reviewed what work remains to be done month by month, in order to complete the plans by December 2015. The goals are listed in the Comprehensive Plan and the Needs are defined in the Strategic Plan. Karen asked the members to decide how they would attain their goals.

Shannon asked how the group would prioritize the Needs. Karen replied the Mayor wants a selection made, followed by an implementation plan that would get others involved.

Shannon commented that human services agencies have historically been placed at the front for being awarded grants. Are we looking to shift away from that?

Reading through the list, does the City do those things, or do the agencies?

Chad wanted to be enlightened as to what perception(s) are keeping people from applying for services?

Shannon noted that both early childhood development and child care are behemoth problems to tackle.

Karen said she sees the City as a role model for other agencies to look to for guidance.

Under Initiative #3, we are already doing that. Enrichment items are complementing what we're already doing.

Initiative #1 is already being done.

Discussing Initiative #5, Chad wants to see a dashboard of data that covers:

- A. What employees in the City workforce specifically looks like in depth – full demographics – where they live (city residents?); homeowners or renters; annual income levels; males vs. females; in what classifications – occupations, ethnicity, age; single parent vs. 2-parent households; education; longevity, etc.
- B. What agencies does the city collaborate with?
- C. What partnerships the city has with which agencies.

Brook asked Karen what she was thinking would be a good place to start.

Karen thought #5 would be good and noted the group could trim the initiative into smaller chunks of work, rather than attempt to resolve it entirely.

Brook asked what the City does to hire non-traditional staff.

Karen sees this Committee as very concerned about employment and employment barriers.

Shannon wants to know what the capacity is for this group to accomplish what is desired.

Karen will try to come up with a few items that this group could accomplish. Maybe it would be a sub-set of the initiatives.

Shannon wants to know what the unserved needs are.

Karen asked her what she would like to see her prepare for the next meeting.

Benita could provide insight on the social equity work.

Chad noted that just being fair is not enough.

Shannon would like to see where Renton residents actually work. Let's just see what it looks like.

## **6. HOMELESS WORK**

Karen provided an overview of current items under review and discussion. Volunteers are trying to locate another location for the Cold Weather Shelter because Harambee is taking the overflow from REACH. The location needs to be in a church, on a bus line, and within walking distance to the Salvation Army.

Emergency Management organizations are very interested in getting a detox and sobering center established – located, up, running, and fully functional in the South King County area.

The REACH dinner venue has relocated to a different church and the participation rate has dropped by 50% because of its new location. It is difficult to reach for anyone using a wheelchair, walker, or pushing a stroller. It is not on a bus line.

ARISE has been struggling for the last few years. Churches have not stepped up to help out. The people who have been running it are burned out and a new board needs to be elected and mentored.

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The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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*Shannon Matson, Chair*

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: NOVEMBER 17, 2015, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Renton City Hall  
COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM